

*Kestrel*

Jenn Blair

**The Parts (Or Prometheus Bound)**

Chorus: A collection, of scabrous and rough.  
Tender and pliant. A woven together  
network of capillary and vein.  
The tissues, reactionary, livid.

Lip

Whistling for beast and labourer alike.  
A hard man, I was not one for words.  
I gathered my small share from the soil  
uttering my curses behind my wife's  
turned back. The morning I died,  
the rain was heavy. I saw it bending  
the willow tree's branches, a shovel  
I forgot to turn in, there against the trunk.

Hand

No one missed me when I fell.  
I was the rogue-charmer, the child  
all tired of soon enough. Never inclining  
much towards work, I dealt cards  
and practiced perfecting the extravagant  
gesture, making the ladies laugh. When  
the bill came, I had nothing to do but steal.  
I thought I would wake up some day  
in debtor's prison. But foot smashing  
against jaw in the fishmonger's alley  
was the last memory I took from this place.

Scalp

Read the creases if you can, like so much  
calligraphy, so much scrawl of worry  
an elaborate cipher, script knotted  
and intricate, further stamped by  
the weakening shoulders of my son.  
I gathered the laundry, washing  
the sleeves of the rich, in hopes  
of finding a better physician,

a more honest cure. I pounded  
out the water, drove it from  
the hemlines, my teeth gritted  
knowing, at the last, it was only  
my own hours I was wringing.

Leg

I was ceaseless over the hills  
and along the lanes. First  
to peddle wares and trinkets  
a charlatan perhaps but if so,  
one of the minister variety,  
visiting those tucked away  
in the humblest alcoves of earth.  
One woman asked me to marry  
so pleased was she to imagine  
a suitor standing at such a  
remote door. Never rich, I  
never minded. A wedge of cheese  
tucked in bright red cloth,  
a fresh book, its leather spine  
deep intoxicant, I would sit at  
the dune's edge by the sea  
proudly surveying my kingdom.

Eye

Density clouded with rheum, jelly  
rimmed by traces of vanished angels,  
I closed that one bad eye at the last with  
bone crushing relief. I was an honest  
grocer who never weighted the scales  
or inflated the bladders or kidneys.  
Then the sky opened and dropped  
overflowing the usually placid river  
til it buried my bolt cloth and goods,  
washing the last dream of my youth away.  
I called it the great deluge,  
and though no serious collector  
found myself suddenly earnestly  
looking for a shoe or comb

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or some other sort of notable  
old man Noah may have dropped.

### Liver

Secret, hidden. My father taught me  
and my brothers alike of phlogistics  
Botany and animals' inward chambers,  
those spaces after which young girls were  
never to query. He believed no one need  
be stranger to their own cartography  
intent on understanding the base  
insides, the mysterious gut, as some  
will go after the heavenly lights.  
Serious, drawn back from the busy  
streets and idle chatter of men,  
he, in old age, fell prey to one  
great passion: the fact that he  
caught cold after staying out  
all night to catch a glimpse of her  
and soon thereafter perished  
made my siblings weep tho  
we had no choice in the end  
but to soundly bless him.

### Foot

Corns on the smallest toe, thick  
skin on the heel, ringworm and rot.  
Idiot they called me, behind my back,  
til the Priest pointed me out as a sign  
of God's blessing, allowing me to light  
the altar candles on even the most  
hallowed of eves and sleep in a hay  
filled stable close to the church.  
When he grew too bent over to give  
Mass, I knew my own rest ending.  
After he was buried, the next priest  
soon found a way to dismiss me,  
and I found a rope, not bitter but  
peacefully looping it around my  
mottled neck for I had known kindness.

Chorus: More than the sum of his parts.  
He was not.  
We are the parts.  
We are owed.